

Fourth Grade

During the fourth quarter, students began work on their first IIM research project relating to the Revolutionary War. If you would like more information about the IIM research model go to www.iimresearch.com. Students began to learn that the Internet is a powerful tool for research, communicating, and sharing ideas. Learning to find information quickly and effectively is essential to good research. Several search sites are designed especially for use by young people. However, no search engine can guarantee the appropriateness or quality of Web site content- which speaks pointedly to the value of empowering students to evaluate a site before relying on its content. We teach them to consider the following:

- Can he or she read the text?
- Are you able to find your way around the site?
- Do all the links work?
- Is the author a reputable source of information?
- Is the information useful?
- Has the site been updated recently?

Together, we looked at several examples of websites which we critiqued for these qualities, and then the students put these skills to work while researching information for their IIM project. Students are now working on collecting information which will be used to create a multimedia slide show for their state project.

In keyboarding, students have learned the location for all the letters of the alphabet and some common punctuation marks using the QWERTY technique. We are continuing to use covers to help with the memorization of key location and finger placement. Several students have been able to remove their covers after reaching the goal of typing 20+ words per minute. Students continue to use the program Type to Learn 3 to provide additional practice and immediate feedback on their progress through the lessons and activities. The final quarter will focus on increasing speed and accuracy through the use of skill builders and timed tests. The goal for each fourth grader is to type at least 18-20 words per minute. Please continue to encourage your child to practice these skills at home or anytime they are using the keyboard.

The following technology standards were introduced and developed during this quarter:

NETS•S (National Educational Technology Standards for Students)

1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

3. Research and Information Fluency

Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:

- a. plan strategies to guide inquiry
- b. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.
- c. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.
- d. process data and report results

4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:

- a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
- b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project
- c. collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions.
- d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions.

5. Digital Citizenship

Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:

- a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
- b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.
- c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.
- d. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.

6. Technology Operations and Concepts

Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations. Students:

- a. understand and use technology systems.
- b. select and use applications effectively and productively.
- c. Troubleshoot systems and applications
- d. transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies.

The fourth grade students have done a wonderful job this quarter. I look forward to next quarter where we will continue to develop and master our technology skills.